1879

Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Thirty thousand voters have petitioned the Swiss Bundesrath for stringent repressive measures against the Anarchists residing in the country. This doubtless shows that the Referendum makes men liberal and tolerant.

The Single Taxers are fond of describing themselves as very uncompromising individualists. How is it, then, that so many of them are joining the Populists and urging coöperation with that party in the coming campaign? Perhaps they think that, if the single tax is individualistic, it is not doing much violence to logic and language to go a step farther and claim that the Populists are also good individualists. If so, they are more logical than they suspect.

Ras Telang, a Hindu gentleman, writing in the "Forum" on affairs in India, ascribes the stagnation in that part of the world to the fact that religion is supreme and allowed to regulate everything in life. He observes slyly and profoundly that Christianity would have been just as fatal to Western nations if they had taken it seriously and made it a rule of life. The Philistines and hypocrites will not relish the implications of this remark of an impertinent stranger who sees too well and speaks right out. Visitors are expected to flatter and sing our praises.

I reproduce elsewhere some excellent remarks on *laissez-faire* from an editorial in the "Popular Science Monthly." Mr. Youmans, I am glad to see, is brave and logical enough to express his hearty approval of Auberon Herbert's position on the dynamite question. Whether he clearly understands Mr. Herbert's positive platform, is doubtful. Certainly Mr. Youmans does not believe in voluntary taxation and the total abolition of compulsory coöperation, while his reference to "the present *unchecked* action of *laissez-faire*" proves that he is either unconscious of the most fundamental aggressions which lie at the root of the present industrial system, or unaware of the most important corollaries of the principle of equal freedom.

The New York dramatic critics have actually shown some intelligence and acumen in their treatment of Shaw's play, "Arms and the Man." When it was produced in London, the dramatic critics of that intellectual centre were so puzzled and nonplussed that they refused to believe that Shaw himself could give an intelligible explanation of his purpose in writing it. Lest, however, the innocent American newspaper readers should be inclined to boast that dramatic criticism is in the hands of more skillful and accomplished men here, it is well to disabuse them by pointing out that the American critics would undoubtedly have surpassed their English brethren in ineptitude and asininity had not Shaw himself saved them from this fate by an elaborate demonstration of the perfect realism of his play in a magazine article. The critics were wise simply because they had been warned and instructed.

Evolutionists and rationalists will read with delight Mrs. Linton's "appreciation" (to use the new literary term) of Prof. Drummond in the "Fortnightly Review" for September. She shows that this favorite apostle of "evolution" as defined and admired by silly and hysterical ladies is a humbug, quack, charlatan, and plagiarist. To gain popularity with the fools and ignoramuses, he deliberately prostitutes himself and travesties science. His alleged discovery of "Love" as *the* great evolutionary factor is simply a vulgar appeal to the weak sentimentalists. Serious students, while fully aware of Prof. Drummond's antics and mischief, have preferred to treat him with contemptuous silence, but it is perhaps well that a word of warning should have been addressed to the stupids who make up Drummond audiences. They will, of course, always run after quacks, but an occasional shock may do them good.

Superintendent Byrnes, the head of the New York police and detective force, declares that he has no faith in the theory that criminals are born with an irresistible tendency to evil-doing. Crime, he states, appears to him to be chiefly the result of environment. Byrnes sees more criminals in a day than the "scientific criminologists" see in a life-time, and his opinion is entitled to more respect than the notions and imaginings and jumped-at conclusions of the bigoted cranks who talk about crime without knowing the A B C of social science. Byrnes knows that the guardians of the law, the police and detectives, are just as corrupt, dishonest, and vicious as the men whom they are hired to hunt down. Depend upon it, he laughs at the hypocrisy or blindness of the people who pay one class of swindlers and crooks, whom they call "officers of the law," for protecting them from another class of swindlers and crooks, whom they call social outcasts and criminals.

The editor of the "Popular Science Monthly" bravely attempts to say something helpful on the labor question from the Individualistic standpoint, and comes very near making some important discoveries. Thus he says: "Instead of perpetually canvassing the supposed rival claims of capital and labor, it would be better if our social reformers would apply themselves to the underlying question how it comes that there is so much competition among the so-called laboring classes for the kind of employment which capitalists supply." An excellent suggestion, but why does not its author set the example? What is *his* explanation of the curious phenomenon? And is it really possible that he is totally ignorant of the explanations which certain social reformers *have* advanced? If it is too much to ask him to study Proudhon, there is some English literature on the subject which would prove an eye-opener to him. He continues: "The labor organizations, which play so prominent a part in the modern world, seem to assume that labor will always be in excess, and devote their chief efforts to neutralizing by artificial means this natural disadvantage. . . . As long as the capitalist has only to blow his whistle, so to speak, in order to get all the 'hands' he requires, the condition of the 'hands' will be one of more or less dependence on him; and therefore the true policy of labor leaders is to try to so dispose of the laboring population that they will not be at the beck and call of capital, but will have a much larger measure than at present of social stability and personal independence." Were Mr. Youmans more familiar with the causes of labor's dependence, he would appreciate the impossibility of the task he points out. The existing monopolies and legislation stand in the way of any successful attempt on the part of labor to undertake anything of a "constructive character." Labor must destroy before it can build, — destroy monopoly and the legislation which supports and maintains it. Here, again, Mr. Youmans is not far from the truth. He says that what the workmen "should long ago have seen is the desirableness of their complete separation from mere party politics, which, so far as they are concerned, is a simple delusion and a snare. What the workman wants is the simplest and cheapest form of government, and, above all, one under which no exceptional favors will be accorded to individuals or classes. If he is not wise enough to see this, but falls a victim to the special pleading used on behalf of preposterous tariff laws, he cannot lay the blame on others; what he wants is understanding, and, until he gets it, he will suffer." When the Individualist talks about monopoly and privilege, he generally means the tariff. The far more injurious monopolies around him he cannot see. But it is so refreshing to hear an Individualist say something semi-rational on the labor question that Mr. Youmans's crudities may be overlooked.

Liberty.

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BENJ. R. TUCKER, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the excise-man, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Individualist Impotence.

A few weeks ago the newspapers printed extracts from a letter written by Herbert Spencer to one of his American followers anent the labor troubles. Mr. Spencer said among other things: "In the United States, as here and elsewhere, the movement toward dissolution of existing social forms and reorganization on a Socialistic basis I believe to be irresistible. We have bad times before us, and you have still more dreadful times before you, — civil war, immense bloodshed, and eventually, military despotism of the severest type." And what is Spencer doing to prevent this catastrophe? What are the Individualists generally doing to avert the dangers indicated? Why, they are denouncing the absurd and insignificant attempts of the politicians at ameliorating the condition of the poor and idle and destitute! Now, these attempts *are* ridiculous, fraudulent, tyrannical, and futile, and no rational being can dispute the correctness of the Individualists' affirmations regarding them. But are these things the worst manifestations of the spirit of the State? Are governments guilty of no *greater* sins and crimes? It is remarkable that the Spencerian and other Individualists never denounce any State Socialism except such as is embodied in legislation urged in the interest of labor, and that whenever they want an illustration, an example, they turn to this relatively insignificant branch of legislative activity. How do they expect to attract the masses of the workingmen, to make their doctrines popular, to disarm prejudice and suspicion? Even Auberon Herbert, the most consistent of the Individualists, in emphasizing the responsibility of the official dynamiteurs, the governments, for the violence of the unofficial Archists, could think of no better concrete case of governmental aggression than the education laws! Can Mr. Herbert complain when some of his readers interpret him as saying to the State that the way to stop bomb-throwing is to abolish education laws, factory and poor laws, and everything intended for the benefit of the disinherited classes, leaving all other violations of freedom and justice intact? Can there be a more revolting absurdity than this concentration of Individualist attacks upon the humanitarian legislation which is really demanded and conceded as a sort of antidote to plutocratic, capitalistic, and monopolistic legislation? The State Socialism of the poor is singled out for denunciation, while the "communism of pelf," to use the Cleveland phrase, is passed over in profound silence! So far as the *principle* is concerned, there is no distinction between aggression by the poor and aggression by the rich, between the robbery of greed and the robbery of compulsory charity, but let us not forget that we are tracing the causes of widespread industrial disturbances, of great class struggles, of revolutionary movements. It is indicative of cowardice or ignorance or class interest to pretend or imply that humanitarian legislation is responsible for the present drift towards military despotism. Liberty always tells labor the truth about its favorite nostrums and never encouraged its follies or invasions, but it recognizes the necessity of devoting most of its strength to the exposure and defeat of those fundamental monopolies of land and capital which, by mocking and paralyzing labor, cause all the aggression and violence which despair prompts.

Y.

Progress and Woman Suffrage.

To the Editor of Liberty:

"Y" urges in reply to my letter that woman suffrage is inadvisable because women are more tyrannical than men: that is the basis of his argument. Incidentally he pleads that, even if women are not more tyrannical than men, it is still inadvisable that they should be permitted to vote, because, voting being a bad thing, the fewer the people that do it the better off we are.

Making no direct rejoinder, let me present another point of view. The tendency of the world today is toward democracy. In such countries as Germany and Russia the most advanced radicals can ask for hardly anything further than constitutionalism and democracy. Because the ballot is an accompaniment of democracy, can it be that "Y" will urge that democracy is not to be accepted as an advance upon monarchy? Surely he will not! Even if the men to be enfranchised were less developed than the ruling classes, less liberal and less intelligent, would that be any reason for regarding their enfranchisement as reactionary? The Russian moujiks may very probably be more tyrannical, more superstitious, than the ruling classes in Russia, and the moujiks are certainly a vast majority, yet I hardly think that "Y" would regard the establishment of democracy in Russia, even with the accompaniment of the voting moujiks, as otherwise than a step forward in social development.

So the enfranchisement of women is a step forward in democracy. As fast as the discriminations against women disappear the differences between them and men will also disappear: women, with the same environment as men, are very much more like men than they are commonly supposed to be.

In the end we should still have nothing better than a democracy, but it would be a much better democracy.

The voting would be much the same, and the proportion of votes against liberty much the same, but a large class of the people who were formerly regarded as incompetents, — fit only to deck themselves with ribbons and do housework, — would be admitted as equal individuals. As great an advance, yes, a greater advance, than the step from qualified to universal male suffrage.

In another way woman suffrage would be directly toward liberty: the dominion of the man over the woman, one of the most odious forms of authority, would be much weakened, and the path would be cleared for its abolition. Many a man who now regards it as his divinely taught duty to sneer at women in general, would have to modify his views when he found the despised women standing by his side to vote as equals under his own revered government. The matter of course assumption by the man of his superiority of judgment at home, with the accompanying assumption of his right to dictate in everything, could hardly be maintained with public admission of political equality. The domestic strand of authority would have to give way.

As for women themselves, they would learn by the political corruption that would at once appear among them that they are not incontaminable darlings. Forced, as they would be, to stand side by side with notoriously unchaste women and to admit their political equality, for, once started, woman suffrage must, by all analogy of the past, soon extend to all women, they would learn not to regard unchastity as an insuperable obstacle to association with a woman, any more than it is with a man.

Even now a good deal of the tyranny of man is caused by the "home and mother" sentimentality. "I shouldn't mind it myself, but the women-folk ought not to see," etc., is often the tone. The tyranny of women would mitigate with their increasing need of freedom for themselves, and although at first they might be ecclesiastically controlled, their enfranchisement would be a severe blow at the very existence of the churches.

If "Y" still doubts, let him ask why all the force of conservatism is at this moment being used to prevent woman suffrage. Is there a church anywhere that advocates it?

Surely with such a recommendation libertarians need not fight very hard against woman suffrage.

JOHN BEVERLEY ROBINSON.

Mr. Robinson's new line of defence is scarcely more successful than the one he has abandoned. Because political progress has followed a certain course, because "it has been so in the past," he assumes that "it must be so in the future." But there is plenty of evidence that in the future progress will follow a very different course. Thus the ordinary newspaper-reading and spread-eagle American is sure that in a republic there must be more liberty than in a monarchy; but the real libertarian knows that there is more personal liberty in England than in the United States. The form of government no longer serves as a correct indicator of the degree of liberty enjoyed by the citizen. If Mr. Robinson were an English "subject," he would decline to work with the agitators for a republican form of government "on general principles," because a republic is, historically speaking, an advance upon monarchy. He would say, and wisely say, that he would favor anything, no matter by what name it goes, that would increase his personal liberty. In Russia, the libertarian would accept democracy because free speech and free discussion would come with it, not because he prefers to be governed by a large number of little tyrants. Were the Czar to promise a larger measure of personal liberty than could be hoped for from a Russian parliament, the libertarian would certainly prefer the rule of the Czar. The form is nothing, the substance is everything. The truth that popular government and liberty are not synonymous terms is one of the recent discoveries, hence it is not surprising that in the past men were not influenced by it.

The enfranchisement of women, like the enfranchisement of the moujiks, would be a step forward in democracy, as Mr. Robinson says. But is the libertarian, the Anarchist, interested in the triumph of democracy? Not at all. His aim is different from that of democracy, and his methods are therefore different. Purer democracy does not imply greater freedom, hence the indifference of the Anarchists to it. There may be more tyranny under pure and ideal democracy, which doubtless involves woman suf-

frage and the Referendum, than under crude and imperfect democracy, and the man who cares, not for democracy, but for freedom, can feel no concern in the struggle for pure democracy.

The other considerations urged by Mr. Robinson are totally out of date. All that he says about the effect of woman suffrage upon the political and social condition of women would apply if men based their opposition to woman suffrage on the old and abandoned belief in the natural inferiority of women. But as a matter of fact, as everybody who has followed the discussion of the subject knows, the two arguments most generally employed by anti-suffragists are that women do not really want the ballot, and that politics being essentially unclean and degrading, it is better for women to abjure it and exert their influence as citizens in better, purer, and higher ways.

Now, *such* objections to woman suffrage do not indicate that men despise or sneer at women, but, on the contrary, that they respect them. Indeed, the grounds now advanced against woman suffrage, instead of being reactionary, are symptomatic of a healthy, though still largely unconscious, attitude towards politics and governmentalism. They point to a growing distrust of force and the symbol of force, to loss of faith in "popular government" as a palladium of liberty. As to the "dominion of the man over the woman," it is largely a thing of the past, and what survives of it is due to causes which woman suffrage will do nothing to remove and much to perpetuate. Economic freedom would solve the problem of the subjection of woman, and economic freedom is precisely what woman suffrage threatens to postpone indefinitely. No, no, the cause of woman demands, not woman suffrage, but the elimination of the "suffrage" (majority government) from important relations of life.

Finally, Mr. Robinson argues that woman suffrage must be a benefit, since the force of conservatism is used to check its advance. The conservatives are also opposed to communism; must he therefore embrace it? Besides, Mr. Robinson states as a fact that which is not a fact. The churches and the conservative societies are becoming more and more friendly to woman suffrage. It is the liberals and worldly men that are seen in the front ranks of the opposition. Mr. Robinson's remarks describe the situation as it was a decade ago, not as it is today. He writes like one who has just returned from Altruria. Y.

Anarchism in Practice.

In the suburban hamlet where I live we have a voluntary defence association.

Having organized itself spontaneously, it has organized itself upon principles of individual responsibility. There are four or five men who are called policemen and clothed in brass buttons to awe the uninformed, but, owing to their precarious tenure of office, they are not supplied with the inward and spiritual gift of "sass" that is needed to give brass buttons real dignity. They are hired, actually hired, by another individual, also polite and well-behaved, who calls himself "captain of police."

His emoluments are derived from contributions of fifty cents a week from householders for "protection."

"I've got a hundred and nineteen subscribers now," I heard him exultantly exclaim, "and didn't Mr. Asterisk get left when he stopped his subscription, and nobody came when he fired off his pistol for help a night or two after! I tell you, he subscribed again pretty quick!"

Not only one defence association, but I now hear of a competitive one that has arisen, attracted by the possibilities of fifty-nine dollars and a half weekly, and bent upon I know not what dark schemes for underbidding the first.

Policemen such as these will refrain from clubbing the life out of their employers, at least, and will be reasonably careful with others lest they club an employer's friend, or a possible future employer, unawares. E.

The Standard of Value.

The need or no-need of a standard of value has puzzled many ardent advocates of free money. I suppose Mr. Westrup is largely, if not altogether, responsible for the negative view, which, after all, merely rejects the idea of a *commodity* standard, money being, as Mr. Tucker has said, unthinkable without *a* standard of value. Mr. Westrup contends that, as the thing measured is as much the measurer as the thing by which it is measured, a *standard* of value, or a monetary unit embodied in a commodity-quantity, is an impossibility. I confess, all the same, there is a plausible show for the contention; and under the influence of "Jevons on Value" I must plead guilty to having temporarily assented to the proposition myself. But the Marxian development of value as a commodity-quantity, or, as Mr. Bilgram puts it, a concrete economic quantity, as against the fleeting will-o'-the-wisp of Jevons, reaffirms the commodity standard as the *sine qua non* of money, free or otherwise. It is a law of value that, the productivity of labor increasing, say, 50 per cent., or doubling the product in the same time, effects a reduction in the value of the product 50 per cent., roughly speaking. This suffices to show that labor-time is the common quality inherent in general values. "But how can time (value) be measured by weight (gold)?" the anti-standard advocate will urge. Simply enough. The price of gold (*i. e.*, its relation to other things and the extent of its purchasing power over them) in a free market is determined by the quantity produced in a given *time*, just as the prices of other things are in relation to each other, or to gold. *Ergo*, if the average time consumed in the production of a table is equivalent to that consumed in the production of ¼ ounce of gold (English sovereign), the price of the table in gold is £1. If the productivity of the table industry increases 50 per cent., £1 is the price of two tables henceforth. Apparently the gold producer has the best of the bargain, but such is not the case, for value is now, as heretofore, accurately expressed in terms of time. Abolish the *commodity* gold as the legal tender in the payment of debts, relegating it to the market as raw material for the arts, and its power to exploit has gone forever. Nothing more than this. The price of gold henceforth will only affect dealers in the metal. A free paper currency expressed in terms of gold (that is, in a gold standard, the sovereign or the dollar remaining as the unit of value) will in no wise affect the relative values of other commodities (whatever the price of gold may be), nor in any way restrict their freedom of exchange.

HENRY SEYMOUR.

Anarchists and the Popular Movements.

The popular movements for better conditions follow each other with such rapidity that it would puzzle the average agitator when to pick them up and when to drop them, were it not that his aptitude for change is even greater than his capacity for reconciling contradictions and harmonizing warring doctrines and schools.

One week it is a Populist campaign, the next a Coxey army is to be organized, then a railroad strike is to be encouraged, and, last but not least, a coöperative colony must be started.

The Anarchist is always invited to help, and when he declines he is called a dreamer and a theorist; his lack of enthusiasm for these causes is mistaken for general apathy. But the Anarchist is in earnest, and that is why he will not turn aside from his work to join hands with the half-educated reformers who understand neither social progress nor human nature.

He will not help the Populists because he knows that increasing the functions of government will make matters worse instead of better.

He will not tell men to go to Washington and ask congress for help, for he believes in calling those home who are there, not in sending more.

He will not advise a worker to strike when every lesson teaches him that such a combat is an unequal one and the worker is nearly always foredoomed to defeat.

Nor, finally, will he help organize a colony, since the coöperation he deems essential is not to be found in the joint-stock system of production and distribution, especially when it is attempted in a wilderness. C.

Is the Boycott Invasive?

To the Editor of Liberty:

In an editorial in Liberty of July 14 I noticed the unqualified statement that the boycott is in no circumstance an invasion, no matter what the boycotter's aim and object may be.

This is perhaps the only point where I differ with Liberty (barring the question of copyright). To me liberty means tolerance; it means, that no individual shall interfere with me so long as I refrain from invading the liberty of others; it must therefore mean that I can think as I please, dress as I please, eat and drink what I please. Yet, according to Liberty's position, I may be punished for doing any of the above things. I do not see any difference in the outrage, whether the punishment comes from society in the shape of a judicial sentence or as a boycott, since the same end can be equally attained by either method. A judge may give me six months in a cell 6x8, with bread and water for food, and society can refuse to sell me anything but bread, or refuse to rent me anything but a cell 6x8, or refuse to buy my labor for six months. The only palpable difference would be that I would be allowed to show myself and be exposed to public scorn.

But the feeling of hatred this sort of treatment would engender would be just as likely to induce a man to throw a bomb among his persecutors as the so-called legal process. They are both crystallizations of society's intolerance, and as such exactly alike. Whether they impose a death penalty by hanging upon a man for a certain offence or boycott him into starvation, is a distinction too subtle for me to grasp.

Granted that the boycott is cheaper; perhaps also the boycotter would not have any remorse for a crime that he did not commit himself or paid his share for. But to me hanging, electric chair, guillotine, or starvation are alike.

You may say that no man is under obligations to

sell me anything or to buy my labor; true enough. But when we talk of equal freedom, we mean that that man is supposed to allow us to enjoy it, and for that reason, when he punishes me for using such liberty, he becomes an invader, whatever his methods. But if he does not believe in equal freedom, he is under no obligation whatever, and he may hang me, imprison me, or boycott me into starvation, according to his taste.

Therefore I say that an Anarchist should not endorse the boycott unreservedly, for he endorses something at least as dangerous as any invasive punishment.

A. S. MATTER.

[Mr. Matter seems to be misled by the term "punishment." He admits that no man is under obligation to sell him anything or to purchase anything he has for sale, but he thinks that it is a violation of equal freedom to "punish" a man for using his freedom legitimately, and he makes the question-begging assumption that the withholding of patronage or the refusal of accommodation, — boycotting, in short, — is "punishment." But he cannot be allowed to assume thus the very point at issue. What, strictly speaking, is punishment? An act that would be an aggression when inflicted on any person not guilty of any offence constituting a violation of equal liberty. We have no right to "punish" an inoffensive man; hence, in asserting our right to boycott him, we imply that boycotting is not punishment. Does Mr. Matter hold that boycotting a man without cause is as much an aggression as imprisoning him without cause? If so, he has not carefully considered the import of equal liberty. Every man has the right to exercise his faculties in every direction so long as he does not invade the equal sphere of any other man. If you prohibit a man from selling or refusing to sell to anybody, you interfere with him and wrongfully limit his freedom. To compel a man to sell to you or buy of you is to establish a monopoly and deprive him of free choice. The fact that he has no substantial reason for ignoring you and preferring another does not alter the matter, since we have no right to stop a man and call him to account for any of his legitimate acts. Mr. Matter should reflect that there cannot be any *passive* aggression. You do not *interfere* with a man by *ignoring* him. "Passive interference" is a contradiction in terms. You have no case, under equal liberty, against a man who refuses to *do* something for your benefit unless he owes it to you to do the thing. But, objects Mr. Matter, practically the result is the same whether a man is boycotted into starvation or deprived of food by force. No, it is not. Those who boycott him do not prevent his going elsewhere, while those who use force do prevent it. One man or a few men may boycott a person without cause, but a boycott without cause by an entire community is inconceivable; hence no practical dangers are to be feared. — EDITOR LIBERTY.]

The Newport millionaires have formed an organization for the prevention of slanderous articles and gossip about themselves in the newspapers. Assuming the right to enforce respect for privacy, the idea is an excellent one, and the non-millionaires might adopt it with advantage. But read what the law-and-order New York "Times" suggests to the suffering millionaires: "The law ought to be made to cover his [the scandal-monger's] offences and to protect the right to privacy. Only in case this cannot be done, or proves not to be efficacious, would the people who propose to 'do something' be justified in resorting to the wild justice of revenge. That would probably be effective. The imminent risk of a semi-weekly horse-whipping and the visible chance of an annual assault with deadly weapons would give the padrone reason to pause. Meanwhile every decent person can do his share toward putting down scandal-mongers by refusing to buy or read the reports of their researches." The reference to the law is manifestly insincere, and the real intention of the "Times" is to encourage the use of violence against the scandal-mongers. Everybody knows that the libel laws have proved "not to be efficacious," and hence the conditions already exist which, according to the "Times," justify semi-weekly horse-whippings and annual assaults with deadly weapons. If this is not inciting to violence, what is it? Obviously the "Times's" respect for law and order, so profound when others are tempted to become law-breakers, is easily silenced when it is prompted by envy and jealousy to assail its more prosperous competitors in the newspaper market. In the last sentence of the quotation, the "Times" advises boycotting, a fact to which I call the attention of those editorial idiots who regard boycotting as a hideous foreignism almost as revolting as dynamite.

In his introduction to "Outre Mer," — a book of notes and impressions of America now running as a serial in the New York "Sunday Herald," — Paul Bourget, French novelist, essayist, critic, and Academician, recommends to all Europeans "a stay of a few months in the United States," telling them that they would "succeed in a perfectly natural way in diminishing their dread of the world which is being prepared for us by Democracy and Science — those two great artificers of our future destinies. For my part," he continues, "as you will see in these notes, I left France with a feeling of deep anxiety concerning the social future, but it was soothed and almost cured in the atmosphere of action that is breathed from New York to Chicago and from St. Paul to Florida." This is either an indication of superficiality or an attempt at gaining favor by insincere praise. Fancy Zola being guilty of such a silly and boyish remark! Has M. Bourget read nothing about Homestead, the Chicago executions, the great railroad strikes, the labor movement generally, and the present state of American politics? Or is M. Bourget a constant and unquestioning reader of Dana's "Sun"?

Certain fashionable women of an uptown ward of this city have announced that they will boycott all shopkeepers who vote the ticket of Tammany Hall. The organ of Tammany, the "Sun," tells these women that "they are indulging in tomfoolery which is as vain as it is reprehensible," and that "New York could not exist for a year if the malignant principle of business which they advocate were carried out by all its inhabitants." Yet Dana plumes himself on his clear understanding of fundamental principles! Let him attempt a demonstration of the criminality of boycotting. It will be interesting reading. As for the would-be boycotters, they are doubtless building better than they know. They propose to use a weapon that is as sure and effective as it is legitimate. They can assert themselves in politics through the boycott without the consent or permission of anybody, and it only remains for them to learn to wield it intelligently. The political infants who are so anxious to learn to walk have no use for the ballot. In the boycott they have their opportunity. The wise and learned and just women who are not willing to trust our future welfare in the hands of the stupid and wicked men can assert their rights and interests in the heritage left us by the fathers by bringing boycotting to bear upon the supporters of iniquity.

The religious press, and the religion-for-revenue press, are congratulating the people and the country upon the defeat of Col. Breckinridge in his campaign for a renomination. It takes very little to make the pious moralists happy in these days of godlessness. The majority of the "virtuous" candidate was only about two hundred, which would seem to show that nearly one-half of the voters of the congressional district in question sympathize with immorality and crime. It is at least highly probable, moreover, that many of those who opposed Breckinridge did so for the sake of appearances, without any real feeling against him. Where, then, is the triumph of virtue?

From Tours to Oceanica.

The former constituents of M. Clemenceau unwittingly conferred a blessing upon France and upon liberalism everywhere when at the last elections, at the bidding of jealous rivals, they defeated him in his contest for his parliamentary seat; for, since his defeat, his paper, "La Justice," has contained each day a leading article from his pen in eloquent furtherance of some good cause. That of which Liberty here prints a translation appeared in the issue of August 26.

The general council of Indre-et-Loire has passed a vote favoring banishment of "those people who, having no means of existence, live by begging." This is one step further in the path entered upon by the new reactionary law.

The thought is this: "To banish Anarchists is excellent. But in every poor man there is the seed of an Anarchist; to get rid of the poor is still better. What do these people do in our midst? They are in *our* sunlight, they breathe *our* air which they corrupt with their maladies of poverty. They encumber *our* almshouses as soon as they are hungry, *our* hospitals as soon as they are sick, *our* prisons when they, who own *nothing*, pretend to appropriate something, and even *our* guillotines when ancestral barbarism reawakens in them, to say nothing of *our* cemeteries in which we have the weakness to give them asylum. They wander in *our* cities, which they infect with their rags and pollute with their vermin. We have to give to them lest they may take. To us, who ask nothing but to live in abundance and joy, the very sight of them is intolerable. Let us be rid of all these swarming and discontented ragamuffins who sow hatred of order, — that order by which we enjoy the blessings that they lack. After all, the Anarchists are right; the poor have no country. The Country is ours, since we possess its substance. With the soil of the fields, with the water of the rivers, with the woods, with the mountains, with the stones of which the houses are built, with the tools of labor, — machines of iron or arms of flesh, — with capital which makes us masters of labor, we have acquired absolute proprietorship of the nation itself, with its history and its language, the traditions of our ancestors and the patrimony of labor and of thought. Out with the people who have nothing, no fireside, no country, no right to occupy as many feet of earth as they need in order to sleep! Hustle them into the holds of ships, and let them disappear in the fogs of Ocean, in search of some lost rock, if there be one which does not reject them."

Such doubtless is the inner, the unavowed reasoning of the excellent general councillors of laughing Touraine, large proprietors and good Christians whom the social problem torments and who occupy themselves with the poor — will they dare deny it? — in order to end their own troubles. Dispute phrase or word they may, but the act reveals the unavowable feeling.

I know not what the wretched would say if they had a chance to speak. Perhaps they would say nothing. In a certain degree stupefying poverty obstructs all the avenues of the mind. Why speak, why revolt, when fatality crushes you? Deprived of property, of society, of all blessings and joys, what matters it to them if they are now deprived of Country, since to deprive them of Country is to deprive them of nothing at all. What do I say? It would relieve them. On the desert rock in the sea of Oceanica perhaps they will not have to pay for the light that enters through the hole in their hut, for the air that crosses their threshold, for the fire that they light, for the things which they eat and drink, for the covering with which they will be provided in order to save the modesty of the administration.

Who then will speak for them? Not the policeman who arrests them, or the district attorney who brands them, or the judge who condemns them, or the proprietor who, from his seat in the general council, exiles them, or the parliament which proscribes them, or the president who executes the law of proscription.

Ah! I remember. There is the priest of the living God, our common father, who cherishes us all alike, from Casimir-Perier — whose will is done in all things — to the lowest vagabond who wears out a remnant of life, raising bits of blackened lung, in sifting the coal that comes from the mine. Where, then, are you, priest of Christ? I do not see you hastening to the aid of the wretched. I do not hear you speak the word of pity and of peace. I know well that at appointed hours, in Gothic cathedrals, starry with candles, fuming with incense, vibrating with sonorous rumblings, before people bending toward the earth, you perform sacred rites. But do you mount the pulpit? When have you taken the side of the weak against the strong? When have you caused the rich to blush for their avarice, the strong for their violence? When have you stayed the secular arm raised to crush the wretched? You cannot. You are paid by the secular power, your churches are endowed by the rich. How turn against your benefactors in the name of those who can do nothing for you? Tomorrow will you say to these Touraine country-squires: "You are wicked men and bad Christians. To escape the necessity of curing the evil which you cause, your only thought is to put it out of your sight"? No, you will preach an appropriate, an adapted gospel, with nothing in it of what St. Paul called the spirit that giveth life. After which you will hold out your hand for yourself and for the poor, and in the privacy of the sacristy you will award yourself both parts. This was not the bidding of Jesus Christ.

Then do not be astonished if men arise who take in hand the cause of justice confided to you by the sublime dreamer of Galilee. If the sacred body which has arrogated to itself the mission of relieving suffering humanity deserts its duty of pity in order to enjoy the pleasures of the century, men will appear who, without a divine mandate, without other title than the right of each to say what is just, and, having said it, to endeavor to realize it, will preach to the suffering masses the legitimate insistance on their share of human happiness. In peaceful progress or in the tumult of revolt they will conquer what was promised on the mount and what the pretended Galileans of today refuse to grant, — the possibility for every man to avoid starvation. Whether they will be Socialists, Communists, or Anarchists, I know not; whether their wisdom will save us or their folly first throw us back into a barbarian reaction, I cannot tell. That is destiny's secret. What I say is that we must find some other solution than the childish one proposed by our excellent Tourangeaux, and that above all we must react with energy against the state of mind which it reveals.

We shall not be able to dodge the social question. There is not an island in Polynesia where it does not organize and animate the struggles of hunger which would be aggravated a hundredfold by the arrival of our deputies of poverty. The problem confronts us at home. It is for us to solve it, in the measure of man's power. Of what use are the ingeniously-contrived complexities of our social organism if it is to end in this lamentable confession of impotence before the savages of Oceanica: "Brothers, we send you brothers whom we have not fattened. Do not eat them if you can make any better use of them."

We live in a republic, my friends of Touraine. There must be something else that can be done. Let us try. And perhaps some day the natives of Oceanica, incapable of achieving a little justice through their rudimentary organization, despairing of success, and moreover disgusted with the cannibalism of their fathers, will propose to send the most pitiable among them to the countries of high civilization, that there they may be taken care of in a manner possible only to peoples whose resources have been so powerfully increased by science. That would be perfectly reasonable.

And if perchance the Oceanicans have ever heard of the *Garden of France*, there they will first apply. Doubtless the general council of Indre-et Loire will wish to receive them with honor. When that day arrives, may there still remain some witness of the vote of yesterday, for I promise myself some joy in his discourse.

"American" Ideas in Russia.

Godkin, Bierce, Holt, Hill & Co. will doubtless learn with great pleasure that their view of the proper method of dealing with the propagandists by deed and revolutionists is shared and vigorously advocated by the leading reactionary magazine of Russia, the organ of the party which has systematically and bitterly fought the progress of liberal ideas in Russia, and which ridicules the devotion of the *bourgeois* semi-individualists to freedom of speech and literature. I hope Godkin and Bierce will reprint the following extract from the "Russky Viestnik's" article on Anarchism with "a song in their souls."

To fight Anarchy successfully, it is necessary to declare merciless war not only upon the Anarchists, but upon all forms of Socialism. Socialistic propaganda must be suppressed, and an end put to all agitation of labor and social questions. Labor unions, meetings, and strikes must be absolutely prohibited; Socialist literature must be suppressed, together with any and all means of agitation. This is the only remedy, if it is not already too late. But parliamentary governments will never have the courage to resort to this measure; only governments not restrained by constitutional fictions can deal with Anarchists, and Western Europe has no such government. *Bourgeois* parliamentarism, professing a belief in "freedom of speech," "free press," and "free assembly," cannot logically deprive its enemies of the same freedoms. The governments of Europe must unite and inaugurate a general campaign against Anarchy without the interference of any parliaments, and this war must be continued until the victory over Socialism is complete and final. Unfortunately the governments of Europe will never dare to use this means of self-defence. Apparently, Western Europe cannot avert the coming storm.

The Gospel in Australia.

[David A. Andrade in the Dandenong Express.]

The best men do not desire to govern their fellows, but the most ambitious and unscrupulous generally desire to, and succeed. Hence it is a rare thing to find a really good man in Parliament, who can make his power felt there to any material extent. The extension of the franchise leaves this serious difficulty untouched, nor does the form of government affect it. "You send your mediocrities into a place of corruption," writes M. Elisée Reclus, "be not astonished if they come out corrupted." While everyone else is blackguarding every parliament as it goes out, and execrating nearly every legislator as he performs, or fails to perform, his legislative "duties," the Anarchist consistently denounces the institution, and not the men. Take our own unfortunate colony today; it is staggering under a general load of poverty, debt, and bankruptcy. And what has brought this about? Some will credit it to strikes; others to the land boom or the bank swindles; or they will say it all comes of sending the wrong men to parliament, and as the years roll by they display their wisdom by continuing to send "the wrong men" into parliament for all time. The Anarchist points to the State as the primary cause of our woes. Our country is rich in natural wealth of all kinds, but statute laws have enabled the few to monopolize the enjoyment of them; our soil is fertile, but statute law has appropriated nearly the whole of it to the few; our productions are abundant, but our statute laws controlling the currency have caused them to be diverted from the pockets of the producers into those of the speculators and capitalists. The laudable efforts of the present government to settle the people on the land and make them independent are being made none too soon. They are but seeking to restore the natural order that has been broken by the intervention of the State — to undo the mischief of former laws. But they do not go far enough. Fortunate as we may be for the time in having a minister of lands whose pet hobby is breaking up land monopoly (a thoroughly Anarchistic action, by the way), and a premier whose strong faith in individuality and firm grasp of free trade economics make him almost an Anarchist in his policy, though he probably is not aware of it; we still have the consciousness that their powers for good are extremely limited, and we have no assurance that their successors will not undo their good work. But to the Anarchist the social cancer remains unprobed. What ultimate advantage is gained in settling the people on the lands if they are forever to continue the victims of the agents of Mammon as they are today? We still want a Christ who shall drive the money-changers from our midst instead of helping them to "reconstruct"; or, at all events, a financier who shall overthrow the present system of usury, and make it possible for the producer to freely trade his products with other producers without the intervention of the banker, the landlord, or even the tax-gatherer.

Why Quacks Thrive.

[Mrs. Lynn Linton in the Fortnightly Review.]

There is nothing which average people dislike more than precision of thought, the logical genesis of opinion, the root-work of a creed; nothing that delights them so much as picturesqueness of statement irrespective of its truth — as sentimentality irreducible by logic or reason to anything resembling common sense.

Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, 38 Council Hall, Oberlin, Ohio.

The "Shoe and Leather Reporter" printed one of our letters, with editorial reply containing economic doctrines that were supposed to have been exploded by Mill, if not earlier.

I have still a few of those leaflets left.

Target, section A. — George T. Angell, president of the American Humane Education Society, 19 Milk street, Boston, Mass. In the August issue of his paper, "Our Dumb Animals," he gave a list of ten classes who would rally to defend the government if attacked by Anarchists, as follows: (1) nearly all capital, (2) army and navy, (3) most of militia and police, (4) government employees, (5) every man who has a pensioner in his family, (6) most church members, (7) savings bank depositors, (8) corporation shareholders, (9) mortgagees and payees of notes, (10) nearly all real estate owners. In the September issue he repeated this, and on another page, telling what he would do with $1,000,000, if he had it, said he would found an independent society to protect public health, because official boards of health are so dependent on politics that they cannot do all that they ought. He is offering a $100 prize for the best short essay on the way to a peaceful settlement between capital and labor. Be as brief as you can, and write "Personal" on the envelope.

Section B. — The "Western Laborer," Omaha, Neb., has a free-for-all column, entitled "The People's Forum."

Section C. — The "National Unionist," 317 Second street, Memphis, Tenn., professes to give special attention to the labor question.

STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

"The garden of the lawe is full of ironical plants, of unexpected flowers; and by no means its slightest charm is the subversion of the natural order, whereby appear at the end of stems and branches fruit just the opposite of that which is promised by the essence of the tree or bush. The apple-tree bears figs, and the cherry-tree medlars; violet-plants yield sweet potatoes, and hollyhocks satisfy. It is delicious." —SÉVERINE.

The Beauties of Government.

☞ *The readers of Liberty are urgently invited to contribute to this department. It is open to any statement of facts which exhibit the State in any phase of its fourfold capacity of fool, meddler, knave, and tyrant. Either original accounts based upon the writer's own knowledge, or apparently reliable accounts clipped from recent publications, are welcome.*

"DISCUSSION" AT PUBLIC EXPENSE.

[New York Evening Post.]

The "Congressional Record" is now pouring out a lot of speeches on the tariff that never were delivered. Senator Quay is still far in the lead. A recent number contained eighty-five pages of his speech of June 16. One hundred and fifty pages or more had preceded this. Of the last instalment, fifty-one pages embodied Mr. Quay's idea of the disasters that would result to the nation from putting petroleum on the free list. The history of petroleum and the methods of extracting it from the earth and refining it and transporting it are narrated in a scholarly way, being reproduced verbatim from an official report of the Department of Internal Affairs of the State of Pennsylvania published about one year ago. The method of making glass is described also in this admired discourse. The only thing wanting is a series of wood-cuts illustrating the method of making oil wells and blowing glass. In a previous instalment of Mr. Quay's speech copious illustrations were employed. All these things serve to obscure the really valuable parts of the "Record," making it difficult to find them. They serve also to bring contempt and anger upon Congress for allowing such waste of the public money; for not only is it costly to print all this stuff, with hundreds of columns of figure-work, but it must all be carried free through the mails as campaign literature. The only satisfaction is that, as a general rule, it will work damage by its excessive stupidity to the political party that sends it out.

SLEEPING WITHOUT CLOTHES.

[New York Evening Post.]

One of the wretched victims of the police raid in the Five Points district, a woman, was arraigned in the Tombs Police Court before Justice Bernard F. Martin. She had been taken from her own room in a crowded tenement house, and was arraigned on a charge of disorderly conduct by Perkins, a Sixth Precinct ward-man, who said that he found the woman lying in bed in her own room.

"Didn't she have a right to do so in her own room, where she had been living with her husband for six years?" demanded the police-court lawyer, who had "taken up" her case.

"Oh, but she was only partly dressed," explained the ward-man, "and I could see her when the door was open."

"People have no right to run about in houses without their clothes on," remarked Justice Martin, as he bent over his slips of commitment blanks, pen in hand. The ward-man cast a triumphant glance at the woman, who leaned up against the bar wringing her hands.

"It ain't true, Judge," she said, "and if you would only bring my husband——" But his Honor was not listening to her. His colleague, Justice Joseph Koch, had entered and amiably slapped him on the back, receiving the cordial greeting, "Hello, Judge!" in reply. "Now, what do you want?" added Justice Martin, jovially, as, with the poised pen still in his hand, he turned away from the prisoner. The lively conversation that followed, interspersed as it was with many smiles and ejaculations of good humor, was for the most part inaudible. Finally the justice on the bench summoned one of his clerks and said, "Where do I sit on Wednesday, anyhow?" When the required information was given, Justice Martin said: "Now, I want that to be clearly understood," and Judge Koch, rising, answered, "All right; I am glad to know how that stands. Much obliged, Judge." With that he departed. Turning round once more, Justice Martin beheld with mild astonishment his prisoner still wringing her hands before him.

"How about this, Judge, er, sergeant, er, officer—oh, no—Counsellor Reilly?" he stammered. The lawyer repeated what he had said, that to lie abed at home was not disorderly conduct.

"Why, certainly not," said the justice, now thoroughly good-humored, and, beaming upon the ward-man, he added: "Really, Officer Perkins, we are all apt to lie about in our rooms without many clothes on sometimes."

Instead of a commitment paper a discharge blank was then hastily filled out, and the half-fainting woman prisoner was released.

THE STATE TAKES NO CHANCES.

[New York Sun.]

The regulations of the British post office require that every unsound tooth shall be taken out of a man's head before he can be employed. An unfortunate girl, who recently was examined for promotion, had fourteen teeth taken out at one sitting by order of the official dentist, who explained that "we can't have girls laid up with toothache."

[The State Socialists will doubtless discover in this a powerful argument for State management of all industries. Everybody will be forced to be healthy and sound: the State must have able-bodied slaves—I mean workers.]

WALKING A CRIME.

[New York Sun.]

Stanley F. Dawson, the 17-year-old son of a traveling salesman of Columbus, O., a pupil in the high school and a member of the Christian Association in that city, came to Brooklyn on August 17, on a visit to young John Norman, whose father is the keeper of a bath-house at Bath Beach. He went to Bath Beach, met his friend, and spent the night with him at the bath-house. Next morning, before his friend awoke, he went out on the beach for a stroll. One of the New Utrecht policemen arrested him as a vagrant, and in spite of his explanation and the fact that he had over $20 in his pocket, as well as a card of membership of the Columbus Y. M. C. Association, he was declared a vagrant by Justice Kowenhoven, and sentenced to thirty days imprisonment in the penitentiary, where he is still confined.

The attention of the State Commissioner of Common Schools in Ohio was directed to the case, and he lost no time in acquainting the Charities Commissioners of Kings County with the facts, and also vouching for the respectability and good character of the imprisoned Columbus boy. An investigation was at once set on foot by the Brooklyn authorities, and this resulted in the issue of a writ of *habeas corpus* by Justice Gaynor, on the application of Lawyer Sanders Shanks, for the production of young Dawson in the supreme court. Justice Gaynor will udoubtedly release the boy. He said: "I hold that any one can walk from here to San Francisco without a penny in his pocket, and can walk on any beach. These cases are far too numerous."

LEGALLY HE IS PRESUMED IGNORANT.

[New York Times.]

PARIS, Aug. 5.—It is such fun! Even during the curious trial of the half black-sheep Anarchists, which will go down to history as the *procès des trente*, and, perhaps, give to posterity more information on the subject than it seems likely to afford us,—a good, big, enjoyable smile was given to all Paris by the following true incident:

M. Roger Cavailhon is the approved modern centaur of the aristocratic steeplechase; and he is already the fearless, lucky winner of over one hundred races; but he is not yet twenty-one, and his military service is still to be endured. Docile to the rulers, he presented his papers, etc., to the military authorities, with the simple request that his peculiar aptitude, talent, or genius—as you will—should be allowed to give its experience to his service. He was assigned to the infantry!

At first he thought there was a mistake, almost a joke, and he endeavored to explain his peculiar case with all due tact and respect, but to no purpose. According to the law, M. Roger Cavailhon has only one year's military service, because his eldest brother happens to be serving at the same time, and the authorities had no power to place him in a cavalry regiment, because, as the law puts it, it is impossible to learn to ride during that short term! So M. Cavailhon, who could render unusual help in the training of horses, must learn to foot it and become a mere know-nothing during 365 days, only because the law has not foreseen the point. There was nothing to do but to enjoy the joke, and probably the grim, stern commanding officer saw it, too.

A COMEDY OF LEGAL STUPIDITIES.

[Advertisers' Guide.]

A funny blunder has been made in the application of the Comstock law. Mr. Jacob B. Wise, of Clay Centre, Kansas, has been arrested for mailing obscene matter. His offense consists in having written Isaiah xxxvi. 12, on a postal card, which he mailed. In doing this, he brought to a ridiculous conclusion a long theological discussion which he had been carrying on by mail with Rev. H. B. Vennum, an evangelical preacher, of Industry, Kansas, to whom the postal card was directed. The fact that a layman could get the best of the argument seems to have incensed this alleged follower of the meek and lowly Nazarene, and he proceeded promptly to "have the law" on his irreverent antagonist. Mr. Wise, after boarding at public expense for about a month, has been bailed out, $300 worth, and must answer for his hideous crime at the next term of the Federal court.

Unless somebody has gumption enough to side-track this case and prevent the threatened trial in October, a laughable dilemma will confront the principal actors. If Mr. Wise is convicted, it will practically amount to a judicial determination that the Holy Bible contains an *obscene* passage, which won't do at all. If he is acquitted, it will prove that this precious law is not effectual for dealing with all kinds of offensive publications impartially, which is about as bad. The Freethinkers in Kansas are a large and influential element, and they are laying low and waiting for October, when they expect to see some fun. It will no doubt be an interesting experience for Brother Vennum, whose indiscretion has precipitated this grotesque situation.

Meanwhile, Mr. Wise, wishing to know exactly what language was upon this famous postal card, wrote to obtain an accurate copy of it, and the district attorney politely mailed him a copy, thereby doing the same thing which he claims is a violation of the law on the part of Mr. Wise. So that, if Mr. Wise is convicted, the district attorney must of a logical necessity prosecute and convict himself, or else all legal and moral sanctions will fall, for it is preposterous that an official, bound to maintain the law, should with impunity commit the same offence for which he procures the conviction and imprisonment of another.

Such cases as this make it all the more manifest that the law itself is a mere fake, the purpose of which is to enable unscrupulous persons to get money out of the credulous and gullible under pretence of suppressing obscenity, and the absurdities of the law will never cease until we get a congress honest and cleanly enough to repeal it altogether.

A CRIME TO OFFEND THE PRESS.

[New York Sun.]

Clovis Hugues, the radical poet, was arrested the other day at Avignon by order of the mayor, after delivering an impassioned ode to Provence at the dedication of the monument to the poet Roumanille. He was taken to the police station, searched, and his papers taken from him; but they were at once returned, with the exception of the manuscript of his poem, and he was set at liberty. The local papers had asked M. Hugues for the poem, only to be refused; they appealed to the mayor, who took this high-handed method to satisfy them.

THE MONOPOLISTS MUST SLEEP.

[Press Cable Message.]

A mechanic, named Detloff, was sentenced in Berlin, recently, to pay three marks or pass three days in jail for having sneezed loudly at night in the street. He was arrested just after the sneeze, as he was entering his lodgings in the Zimmer Strasse. The charge against him was "gross misconduct," and, despite his plea of a cold, it was sustained fully by the court.

A BLESSING IN DISGUISE.

[Rochester Post-Express.]

A man can divorce his wife in France if she persists in going on the stage without his consent. But Portugal goes France one better. There, if a wife publishes literary works without the husband's consent, the law frees him at once.

Two Executions.

Of late the columns of the French journals have been devoted chiefly to two topics: first, the cutting off of the head of a priest named Bruneau, who had been convicted of murder and numerous offences against chastity; second, the cutting off of the official head of one Dr. Robin, the manager of an orphan asylum at Cempuis, founded by a private individual, but placed under governmental supervision, this Dr. Robin being a Positivist who had refused to teach the orphans that France is bigger than the world or that God is bigger than man, and who allowed them, boys and girls alike, to go into the water together in ordinary bathing costumes, — as a result of which, it is said, a precocious infant of the male persuasion, aged four, made a vigorous attempt to capture the virtue of a maiden too young to have consented even in those States of the American Union considered most benighted by those Anglo-Saxon prudes whose ideal civilization would prevent a woman from legally parting with her virtue until she has reached an age at which by no possibility could any one be persuaded to take it as a gift. Of these two executions Henri Rochefort thus writes in "L'Intransigeant" of September 3:

What a pity it is that popular exasperation should have forced Casimir de Pont-sur-Seine to let justice take its course in the affair of this worthy Abbé Bruneau! Had this ecclesiastic, who died in such a Christian fashion, been pardoned, he would have been just the person to manage the orphan asylum at Cempuis, having made enough orphans to fit him to bring them up.

No doubt this old patron of the disreputable houses of Laval would have hastened to separate the sexes, knowing better than anybody the danger of uniting them. As aids he would have been given some of the good Sisters formerly acquitted for having seated on red-hot stoves the little girls confided to their Christian charity.

The two *congréganistes* employed in the house of La Fouilleuse — and whom our ever indulgent judges have punished with a few francs' fine, coupled with an application of the Bérenger law, for having tortured a large number of their pupils — have likewise a place marked for them in the administration of the establishment which Dr. Robin dishonored at once by his atheism and his solicitude for his scholars.

For, some years ago, they expelled the Jesuits from our educational institutions, and today it is the Freethinkers that are driven out. Thus it is easy to sum up the progress made in ten years by the opportunist republic in the path of liberalism and reason.

Observe the predicament of those orphans in view of the notions of morality and religion successively instilled into their minds! Yesterday they were informed that Jesus Christ was a poor devil who told to unfortunate fishermen as ignorant as himself stories calculated to make one sleep standing; tomorrow they will be assured that he is the own son of a certain God who, doubtless through paternal love, sent him upon earth to get himself crucified in our honor.

It will be explained to them that, although the son of God the Father, he was at the same time the son of a certain Mary who had deceived her husband with a second God called the Holy Ghost: which made this Jesus the child of two papas, neither of whom had ever been married to this mamma.

They will be taught regarding the mystery of the immaculate conception of this astonishing woman who conceived without sin, whereas other women conceive only sinfully, and who, at least twice an adulteress, was nevertheless a virgin.

They will be made to understand how the Abbé Bruneau, although an assassin, an incendiary, and a robber, enjoyed, even when his head was under the knife, the power of forcing, by the utterance of a few cabalistic words, the said Jesus to descend into a bit of bread, execrable to swallow, since it contains neither yeast nor salt.

And, although God Omnipotent, in vain would Jesus have protested against being manipulated by this condemned murderer, for it was the latter's right to administer him to whomsoever he saw fit.

And many other fine things, quite as true and probable as these, will be crammed down their throats, so that these children, accustomed to believe, in accordance with the teaching of Dr. Robin, that two and two have always made four, will ask themselves if their new professors are not escaped lunatics.

And this is not all: accustomed hitherto to eat when hungry and to drink when thirsty, they will find themselves condemned to subsist on Fridays on what the sailors call Newfoundland beefsteak, — which is nothing else than salt cod.

More — or rather less — they will fast at every vigil (Do you know what a vigil is? No? Well, neither do I) during the week called holy, — for in France we have two famous weeks, Holy Week and Bloody Week, — and also at the approach of Ascension Day, Assumption Day, Easter, Pentecost, and in general whenever the capuchin fathers entrusted with the management of the asylum shall feel the need of stuffing their pockets with a little of the money which will be allotted them by the city.

But then you may rest easy; the cabinet will never see fit to meet in extraordinary session for the express purpose of investigating their conduct and decreeing their dismissal. The orphans, after several years of this educational system, will leave their hands either in a state of stupidity or in an attitude of rebellion. They will become Anarchists like Sebastien Faure, who was also brought up by the priests, or opportunists and bribe-takers like Jules Roche, who, reared by the Jesuits, has made known their devious ways to his colleagues of the Palais-Bourbon.

Unfortunately Casimir, despite the solicitations of Leo XIII, was prevented by fear of riots from signing the pardon of the assassin Bruneau. But he was obliged to compensate the Vatican in some way, and so he has executed Dr. Robin.

In "La Justice" of September 3, M. Clemenceau treats the same subject in a philosophical vein.

What horrifies the sober-minded *bourgeoisie* in the Cempuis experiment in irreligious education is that this teaching is given "to little unfortunates *who have not the choice* between Cempuis and something else." This lament is prompted by a good feeling. But tell me truly, M. Magnard [editor of "Le Figaro"], who *chooses* in this life?

Surely no idea can be more grotesque than that of proposing to a child of six years to choose between Cempuis and a convent school. And yet this would be less ridiculous than to make a child of two days, who certainly has not been consulted, a Catholic by virtue of baptism. This determination involves the gravest consequences for the future. Who then proposes to take the advice of the interested party? Do you plead universal consent? How absurd! The Catholic religion, to be sure, makes a pretence of universality, — as its name indicates, — but the religion so far embraced by the majority of mankind is an atheistic religion, — Buddhism. And Catholicism is so far in the rear that, if a vote were to be taken of all the people on the planet, universal suffrage would put it in a minority of several hundred millions. It is this religion of a minority which we inflict upon our child, still wet from its mother's womb, for the simple reason that so our father did with us. This does not shock the philosophers of "Le Figaro," so great is the force of habit, but it does terrible violence to reason.

To be sure, the child will defend himself later, if he can. If he acquires an individuality in spite of our effort to prevent it; if he comes out victorious over fatal atavism: if he frees himself from our chains and from the chains of his ancestors; if he thinks with his own thought, — which after all will be in any case that prepared for him by his progenitors, — then the seal put upon him at his birth will perhaps one day be removed. Do we confine ourselves, however, to that taking of possession of which baptism is but the emblematic sign? By no means. The child is followed, day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute. As fast as his sensations awaken, they are interpreted for him. He wishes to know; he is given ready-made formulas which, being the first to penetrate the virgin glades of his young brain, take root there with the authority of mathematical axioms beyond dispute.

Terrible questions, those which the child asks. They are those of primitive man. He has not time to learn, to investigate, to analyze the universe, to create science, and yet, cost what it may, he must have a reason for things. His father gives it to him, as summary, as vague, as imposing, as the lesson of the thunderbolt was to the cave-dweller. The child does not ask for a book on physics or chemistry, any more than for Laplace's "Mécanique Céleste." He simply asks: "Where are we, and why are we here?" And we anticipate his question with the physics and the chemistry and the mechanics of the Bible.

What is the result? That later, when he is confronted with another solution, it must be subordinate to the first, which will always dominate his thought, his life. Thus a decision is made for him before he has had time to become acquainted with himself. The father, the tutor, those who have given him shelter, choose for him as they were chosen for: with a word they fix a life, decreeing sorrows or joys as others decreed sorrows or joys for them. In Alpine climbing it is the common bond that decides the fate of all. Thus sombre fatality, with the inseparable links of its chain, subjugates us to our ancestors in order to subjugate to us our posterity, dragging the whole tragic chain from the sublime heights to the bottomless abyss.

In the universal concatenation of causes can we conceive an atom, when pushed by its law into the series of combinations imposed upon it by the strongest attraction, stopping to say: "I have chosen"? The evolution of life masks the phenomenon with its complications, but does not change it. Following the dispositions received from our ancestors, sensations, impressions, thoughts will cause in us determinations and desires whose conscious combination gives us the sentiment of our personality. The force of evolution which is our law, in opening to us an unknown field of action in which our highest conceptions can find play, permits us, by appropriate mental and moral gymnastics, by a rational education of the conscious and the unconscious, to influence our development and create in our own eyes the amount of individual responsibility necessary to the working of societies. But with what forces shall we enter into this frightful conflict between so many hostile elements, if not with the power of good and evil which has come to us from the incalculable combinations of a prodigious line of ancestors, or, to go back still farther, from the action of eternal forces of which we are the passing product?

There is no education that will turn a black man into a yellow man. But there is an intellectual and sentimental discipline which, from a long series of cannibals, will produce some day a Sakya-Mouni who, still more universal than the Christ who died for humanity only, six hundred years before Golgotha will give his body for food to the hungry litter of a tigress.

We do not choose our life any more than we choose to live. To hold the creature responsible to the creator is absurd, contradictory, mad. I say to God: "If you are not content with me, you had only to make me otherwise," and I defy him to answer.

To conclude: when unknown laws entrust to our care the puling child engendered by ourselves or by others, let us aid him. That is the precept. Let us aid him in body and mind. Let us teach him the knowable, let us put before him the history of the human mind in the field of the unknowable, let us arm him with the rule of justice which must be the condition of social life, and then: "Good luck, friend! The supreme consolation is that, after having toiled and suffered and cried, after having transmitted your toil and suffering and lamentation, you will return to that sweet repose which was yours prior to life, happy in having lived in order to know and to love, happy in living no longer that at last, after all your troubles, you may share in the sublime indifference of things eternal."

Laissez-Faire in Practice.

[Editorial in Popular Science Monthly.]

Action and reaction, in the social world as elsewhere, are equal and opposite; and given the fact that man's instinct is to pursue happiness, and the further fact that the happiness of each individual is largely dependent on the dispositions of others, the actions and reactions taking place in a society not strangled by government control would steadily tend toward an increase of the general welfare. Public opinion is, in all free communities, a powerful agent of reform; but it would be still more powerful if it did not so often seek to embody itself in law. We have yet to be convinced

that the world has suffered injury by any application of *laissez-faire*. Under that *régime* things will not always be done rightly, but neither would they always be done rightly under any system of tyranny, Socialistic or other, that could be invented. *Laissez-faire* was probably never carried further in the history of the world than in the early history of the several colonial communities which afterward combined to form these United States; and the principles of paternalism and protection in government were probably never carried further than in the management during the same period of the French colonies to the north and east of us. And what was the result in either case? The neglected colonies of England, with their very loose system of local government, grew strong and vigorous and wealthy, while the over-protected colonies of France seemed smitten with industrial and commercial paralysis. In war the latter were for the most part efficient and formidable, because then they acted in complete submission to leaders accustomed to command; but in peace they languished and withered. The English colonies, the New England ones in particular, might be compared to vigorous youngsters full of animal spirits, and meeting with many a disaster through their recklessness and impatience of control. The French ones, on the other hand, resembled puny and exacting nurslings always crying out for maternal help and succor. *Laissez-faire* has its drawbacks, but it means, on the whole, wealth, vigor, resource, and capacity for recuperation. It does not mean dynamite; the latter, as Mr. Auberon Herbert has well shown, being the natural concomitant of over-government.

Timely Utterance to Sane Thought.

To the Editor of Liberty:

I feel that I am censurable for my tardiness in giving public expression to my gratitude to J. William Lloyd for his altogether admirable exposition and defence of scientific social reform. Nothing heretofore written on the subject of "propaganda by deed" can fairly, in my opinion, be compared with it. Mr. Lloyd's presentation of the question is temperate, kindly, clear, forcible, unanswerable. He has triumphantly disposed of every objection to the methods of peace. He has shown that this ghastly gospel of violence is not only anti-social and barbarous, but inexpedient to the uttermost degree.

The reply to Mrs. Holmes is the best thing written by any one on the methods of social teaching, and it is also the best thing ever written by J. William Lloyd on any subject. Such is the unqualified conviction of

Yours for equal freedom, E. C. WALKER.

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